

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 0859

ROME FOR SARROS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PL, VT

SUBJECT: ARCHBISHOP POGGI ON SURPRISE VISIT TO POLAND

1. THE EVENING TELEVISION NEWS REPORTED ON FEBRUARY 9 THAT ARCHBISHOP LUIGI POGGI, VATICAN REPRESENTATIVE FOR PERMANENT CONTACTS WITH THE GOP, HAD JUST CONFERRED WITH MINISTER KAZIMIERZ KAKOL, DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS. POGGI ARRIVED IN WARSAW ON FEBRUARY 8 TO SERVE AS A VATICAN OBSERVER AT THE UNESCO CONFERENCE ON THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC MONUMENTS. TELEVISION AND PRESS ACCOUNTS INDICATED ONLY THAT HE AND KAKOL HAD DISCUSSED PROBLEMS OF MUTUAL INTEREST.

2. A HIGH-LEVEL EPISCOPATE OFFICIAL TOLD US ONLY A WEEK AGO THAT POGGI WOULD PROBABLY NOT MAKE HIS NEXT TRIP TO POLAND UNTIL AFTER THE SEJM ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 21. A CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TOLD US ON FEBRUARY 10 THAT HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES WERE SURPRISED BY POGGI'S VISIT AND HAD ONLY LEARNED OF IT A FEW DAYS AGO.

3. COMMENT: WHATEVER ITS ACTUAL PURPOSE, POGGI'S VISIT CANNOT HELP BUT HAVE DOMESTIC IMPLICATIONS. HIS MEETING WITH KAKOL TOOK PLACE THE DAY BEFORE THE SEJM WAS TO ADDRESS THE QUESTION OF A SERIES OF CONSTITUTIONAL AMEND-
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MENTS THAT HAVE GREATLY AROUSED THE EPISCOPATE AND CATHOLIC

INTELLECTUALS. ALTHOUGH FINAL DECISIONS HAVE NOT BEEN RENDERED, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT, THROUGH A PRICESS OF GIVE-AND-TAKE, LANGUAGE HAS BEEN EVOLVED ON SUCH CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES AS THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S LEADING ROLE IN SOCIETY THAT HAS WON AT LEASE GRUDGING ACCEPTANCE FROM THE EPISCOPATE AND A MAJORITY OF THE FIVE ZNAK (CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL) DEPUTIES TO THE SEJM. POGGI'S MEETING WITH KAKOL WOULD HAVE THE SYMBOLIC EFFECT OF ASSOCIATING THE VATICAN WITH THIS REPORTED RECONCILIATION OF VIEWS BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND STATE ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES.
DAVIES

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